



Proficiency-Based Diplomas

Implementation Plan

October 2015

1.0 Description

The Maine state legislature enacted Public Law Chapter 669, Maine's Proficiency-Based Diploma law, to ensure that students graduating from high school would be held to a high standard and be ready for college and careers. In alignment with this vision, the Maine Department of Education seeks to coordinate and improve the implementation of this law, internally to the agency and externally state-wide.

This plan describes how the Maine Department of Education (Maine DOE) will coordinate its work and the work of education stakeholders throughout the state of Maine to implement Proficiency-Based Diplomas and, more generally, the shift to Proficiency-Based Education (PBE). The plan is aligned to Education Evolving, the Maine DOE strategic framework.

PBE is intended to improve education for all students in Maine. For this reason, Maine DOE will use student- and teacher-level indicators to assess whether this plan is on track, or whether course corrections are needed.

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2.0 This work supports the following Goals from the Strategic Plan:

Education Evolving component	SIS delivery	SIS support
Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction		
1. Rigorous standards and aligned curricula	X	
2. Learner-centered instructional practices	X	
3. Assessment systems that provide timely, accurate data on achievement and growth	X	
4. Information systems that track learner growth over time	X	
Great Teachers and Leaders		
1. Common standards for teacher and leader effectiveness		X
2. Initial preparation and professional development programs that are rigorous, relevant, and data driven		X
3. Next-generation evaluation systems for teachers and leaders		
4. Communities of practice designed to foster continuous improvement		X
Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement		
1. Advancement based on demonstration of mastery	X	
2. Student voice and choice in the demonstration of learning	X	
3. Expanded learning options	X	
4. "Anytime, anywhere" learning	X	
Comprehensive School and Community Supports		
1. Effective and efficient services for learners with special needs		X
2. Coordinated health and wellness programs		
3. A commitment to community and family engagement		X
4. Career and workforce partnerships		
Coordinated and Effective State Support		
1. Seamless integration of educational programs from early childhood into adulthood		
2. Adequate and equitable state resources for Maine's schools		
3. Comprehensive integration of technology		
4. A robust and transparent accountability and improvement system		

3.0 Desired Outcome

By 2021, 100% of Maine districts will have developed and put into practice rigorous standards and instruction, assessments, and mechanisms to report proficiency, and the Maine state-wide cohort graduation rate will remain at its current level of 87%. As a result, students will be more prepared for college, careers, and life.

4.0 PBE Implementation Strategies

Strategy name	Key metrics and definitions of success
Support districts to understand, measure, and report proficiency according to rigorous standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% of districts will report full implementation of standards and assessments by 2021, as shown in the annual district survey<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ 0 percentage point implementation progress gap between high-poverty and isolated districts and their peers• District and state-wide graduation rates will not be negatively impacted by PBE implementation
Support struggling districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 50% of districts indicating that they were an extension 5/6 in 2014 will report substantial¹ implementation progress in start of the 2016-2017 school year.• Fewer than 30% of the districts will be classified as struggling² (currently measured as districts who are extension 5 or 6) by 2018
Support all educators to align instructional practice to PBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DOE will increase the scale of professional development implementation<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Professional development sessions will be offered multiple time in 8 content areas for two- three consecutive years by 2019◦ At least 210 teacher leaders will attend DOE-led professional development sessions by 2015-2016◦ At least 2100 teachers will be reached through PD outreach of the teacher leaders by 2016-2017◦ The professional development will include participation from 75% of the LEAs and will include representation from 50% of the district with scores in the lowest quartiles for ELA and Math.• Beginning in 2016-17, 100% of districts will be incorporating feedback on alignment of teacher practice to PBE as part of their Personal Evaluation and Professional Growth (PEPG)

¹ Expected progress will be determined once results from the 2015-16 extension renewal survey are analyzed to establish a preferred measure of implementation progress and a benchmark against which progress will be assessed.

² Struggling districts will be classified using the results from the 2015-16 extension renewal survey.

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Strategy name	Key metrics and definitions of success
	<p>model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Year 1: 100% of teachers in the network report that they have shifted their practice to incorporate formative assessment changes as a result of the network ○ Year 2: 100% of teachers in the network report that student outcomes have changed as a result of formative assessments ○ Year 3: the network has provided X teachers with improved formative assessment tools and practice
Align resources and policy at the state level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● By the end of the 2017-2018 session, all policy and rule work will have begun and 80% will be completed ● By 2025, 0 outstanding policy and rule questions will remain unresolved ● By June 2017, the field will perceive substantial improvement in Maine DOE support for PBE and district-level implementation, as measured by a second capacity review
Understand the progress of PBE implementation state-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maine DOE will have established robust internal progress monitoring routines, both internally and with districts, by January 2016 ● Students graduating from districts who have fully implemented proficiency based diplomas, who enter a postsecondary institution, are less likely to need remediation. [Need to set target once we have baseline]

6.0 PBE Implementation Activities

6.1 2015-2016 Plan Detail

Strategy / Major project	Fall 2015	Winter 2015	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Fall 2016	Winter 2016
Strategy 1: Support districts to understand, measure, and report proficiency according to rigorous standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot assessment task development – Stanford Assessment Center through Innovation Lab Network (ILN) • Attend ILN convening • Complete renewal analysis to support decisions for school year and legislative progress report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite and convene proficiency-based/educator effectiveness advisory committee (2-year term) • Give progress update to Education and Cultural Affairs Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine peer review standards • Showcase LIS/NESSC innovations in districts and schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold peer review “dry run” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete renewal analysis to support decisions for school year and legislative progress report • Give progress update to Education and Cultural Affairs Committee • Plan for convening of stakeholders to begin determining CCR definition (engage David Conley) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene stakeholder groups to determine CCR definition

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Strategy Major project	Fall 2015	Winter 2015	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Fall 2016	Winter 2016
Build district assessment literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and score RFP • Develop contract agreement with vendor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene cohort 1, year 1 (50 schools) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue supports for cohort 1, year 1 schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue supports for cohort 1, year 1 schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue supports for cohort 1, year 1 schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene cohort 2, year 1 (50 schools) • Convene cohort 1, year 2
Strategy 2: Support struggling districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDI assist with 2015 site visit data analysis • Develop school guide to choosing reporting protocols <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop assessment metrics pros and cons ○ Criteria for rigor and complexity of reporting standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and determine viability to scale feedback conversations to all high-need districts/schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Extension 6/struggling district site visits and convenings • Develop implementation tools in accordance with regularly assessed needs among districts 			
Strategy 3: Support all educators to align instructional practice to PBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Guiding Principles resources • Engage math specialist to monitor practice shifts related to Math professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Guiding Principles resources • Content specialists provide guidance for what proficiency looks like in their content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Guiding Principles resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Guiding Principles resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Guiding Principles resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Guiding Principles resources

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Strategy / Major project	Fall 2015	Winter 2015	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Fall 2016	Winter 2016
Title II B Grant: Maine Teachers Instructional Practice (MTIP) Network (major project)	•		• Create first teacher cohort	• Hold summer planning and resource vetting sessions • Summer Institute	•	•
NESSC engagement	• Monthly NESSC leadership phone conversations • Webinar for NESSC LIS	• Monthly NESSC leadership phone conversations • Webinar for NESSC LIS	• Monthly NESSC leadership phone conversations • Webinar for NESSC LIS • NESSC annual consortium	• Monthly NESSC leadership phone conversations • Face-to-face convening with LIS schools • Face-to-face NESSC leadership convening	• Monthly NESSC leadership phone conversations • Face-to-face convening with LIS schools • Face-to-face NESSC leadership convening	• Monthly NESSC leadership phone conversations • Monthly NESSC leadership phone conversations
ILN engagement	• Monthly ILN check ins • ILN convening	• Monthly ILN check ins	• Monthly ILN check ins • ILN convening • Complete proposal for regrant project	• Monthly ILN check ins • Begin regrant work	• Monthly ILN check ins • Continue regrant work	• Monthly ILN check ins

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Strategy Major project	Fall 2015	Winter 2015	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Fall 2016	Winter 2016
Strategy 4: Align resources and policy at the state level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize list of policies (state level) that need to be addressed Create a timeline for revising rulemaking and policies for PBE Revisions to Maine PBE diploma for Education disruption to PBE diploma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidance to align policies between K-12, career and technical education, and adult education Title II B IHE grant alignment to PBE needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidance to align policies between K-12, career and technical education, and adult education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect and analyze data on transition funds spent by each district Develop guidance to align policies between K-12, career and technical education, and adult education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidance to align policies between K-12, career and technical education, and adult education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidance to align policies between K-12, career and technical education, and adult education
Strategy 5: Understand the progress of PBE implementation state-wide				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send out and analyze formative progress checks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send out summative progress survey Hold progress monitoring routines with SIS and Commissioner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate high-level summative district results to broad stakeholder audience Send out and analyze formative progress checks

6.2 Strategy Profiles

Each of Maine DOE's five strategies is defined with a description, theory of action, overall timeline, and details regarding key underlying projects. The projects outline activities that will ensure each strategy's success, as well as the stakeholders involved, risks, and communication considerations.

Strategy 1: Support districts to understand, measure, and report proficiency according to rigorous standards

Timeline (yearly quarters)

- Solid gray box indicates ongoing work

Project	2015				2016				2017				2018				2019				2020				2021						
	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
Pilot assessment task development – Stanford Assessment Center through Innovation Lab Network (ILN)																															
Build district assessment literacy																															
Attend ILN convening (October 14-16)			●																												
Complete renewal analysis to support decisions for school year and legislative progress report		●																													
Use LST meetings to collaborate across teams		●	●	●																											
Invite and convene proficiency-based/educator effectiveness advisory committee (2-year term)		●	●	●																											
Give progress update to Education and Cultural Affairs Committee			●																												

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Provide monitoring and reporting supports
Showcase LIS/NESSC innovations in districts and schools
Plan for and convene stakeholder groups to determine CCR definition

- Solid gray box indicates ongoing work
 - Black dot indicates periodic events

Description: Maine DOE will work with districts to build the infrastructure necessary to implement proficiency-based diplomas. This support will focus on developing the following important components:

- Guidance and capacity for selecting, measuring, and reporting on standards
 - Systems to measure and report proficiency
 - Guidance for setting proficiency targets

Theory of action: If sufficient SEA capacity is dedicated to collecting and distributing effective methods of creating, measuring, and reporting on standards, and if districts are able to apply these effective methods to their practice, and if state leadership is regularly informed of progress and provides appropriate support as a result, then districts will be able to implement the structures required to award proficiency-based diplomas to all students.

Strategy 2: Support struggling districts

Timeline (yearly quarters)

- Solid gray box indicates ongoing work
- Black dot indicates periodic events

Project	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2
Annual Extension 6/struggling district site visits and convenings		•		•		•	
EDI assist with 2015 site visit data analysis	•						•
Develop implementation tools in accordance with regularly assessed needs among districts							
Assess and determine viability to scale feedback conversations to all high-need districts/schools							

Description: Maine DOE will refine its methods for collecting data on district PBE implementation, then differentiate support to districts that require or ask for more assistance.

Theory of action: If Maine DOE continues to bring together districts in most need of assistance in order to spread best practices, and if Maine DOE can regularly learn from these districts what kind of support they need immediately, and if Maine DOE can respond to these needs with just-in-time resources that address the needs of many districts, then districts that would otherwise struggle will have the resources and knowledge they need to award proficiency-based diplomas on time.

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Strategy 3: Support all educators to align instructional practice to PBE

Timeline (yearly quarters)

- Solid gray box indicates ongoing work
- Black dot indicates periodic event

Project	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Title IIB Grant: Maine Teachers Instructional Practice (MTIP) Network	3	4	1	2	3	4	1
Develop Guiding Principles resources							
Guiding principles support phase 2, including credentialing (additional resources to be defined)							
Use MEPRI to gather feedback from educators and develop focus for research and analysis							
Monitor practice shifts related to Math professional development							
Content specialists provide guidance for what proficiency looks like in their content							
Plan for resources to support for student Voice and Choice							
Northeastern Secondary Schools Collaborative (NESSC) engagement							
Innovation Lab Network (ILN) engagement							

Description: Maine DOE will coordinate stakeholders and content experts to help define the shifts in instructional practice necessary, for teachers and school leaders, to successfully implement PBE. These shifts will align with educator effectiveness expectations.

Theory of action: If teachers are brought together in order to learn and share classroom practices aligned with proficiency-based instruction, and if Maine DOE provides clear guidelines for how instruction can enable students to demonstrate proficiency in the Guiding Principles and content areas, and if Maine DOE receives feedback from teachers related to their success and challenges with implementing instruction aligned with proficiency-based education, then teachers will have the understanding and resources they need to provide students the opportunity to graduate with a proficiency-based diploma.

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Strategy 4: Align resources and policy at the state level

Timeline (yearly quarters)

- Solid gray box indicates ongoing work
- Black dot indicates periodic events

Project	2015				2016				2017				2018				2019				2020					
	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Collect and analyze data on transition funds spent by each district			•				•							•			•						•			
Finalize list of policies (state level) that need to be addressed:																										
• Adult education																										
• Special education																										
• Career and technical education																										
• School improvement																										
Create a timeline for revising rulemaking and policies for PBE																										

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Description: Maine DOE will determine specific policies, rules, and procedures at the state level that are misaligned or conflict with PBE implementation, as well as areas where resource alignment could be improved. Maine DOE will then recommend improvements to help coordinate and integrate PBE implementation at the state and district level.

Theory of action: If Maine DOE can remove policy and rule barriers to awarding proficiency-based diplomas, and if districts are able to spend transition funds to implement proficiency-based diplomas, and if Maine DOE and districts understand the flexibility available to students when demonstrating proficiency, then districts will encounter few or no structural barriers to awarding students proficiency-based diplomas.

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Strategy 5: Understand the progress of PBE implementation state-wide

Timeline (yearly quarters)

- Solid gray box indicates ongoing work
- Black dot indicates periodic events

Project	2015				2016				2017				2018				2019				2020				2021				
	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4			
Complete PBE implementation plan with key metrics documented																													
Send out summative progress survey	●				●				●										●										
Hold progress monitoring routine with Standards and Instructional Supports (SIS) and Commissioner		●				●				●										●									
Communicate high-level summative district results to broad stakeholder audience																													
Revise renewal survey to create “lighter” formative progress checks																			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Send out and analyze formative progress checks		●	●	●		●		●		●		●		●		●		●		●		●		●		●		●	
Triangulate evidence of effectiveness (assessment data, graduation rate data, proficiency data) to ensure quality																													

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Description: Maine DOE will develop a robust progress monitoring structure, both internal to the agency and external with legislators and district leaders, to ensure that

- 1) Relevant data are used for decision-making at every level,
- 2) Educators and policymakers share a common understanding of PBE implementation state-wide, and
- 3) Districts are empowered to self-monitor aligned to state progress monitoring.

Theory of action: If Maine DOE continues to collect robust implementation data from districts, and if districts understand the value of communicating areas of success and challenge of implementation to Maine DOE, and if Maine DOE holds frequent and high-quality progress monitoring routines to keep all relevant stakeholders aware of progress, and if state leadership makes data-informed decisions to continue to provide districts with the necessary guidance and resources, and if all educators use multiple measures to ensure that rigor is maintained while proficiency-based diplomas are implemented, then all education stakeholders in Maine will know and be able to act upon the necessary information to implement proficiency-based diplomas with fidelity.

